

# SHARP-SHOOTER

**TAKING AIM TO BETTER SERVE THE CUSTOMER**

Volume 3, Issue 8

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## SHARP Team Appreciative

The SHARP Team would like to convey their appreciation to everyone who helped make the upgrade to version 7.0 a success. After several long, hard months of preparing for the upgrade, there was one ingredient that finalized the successful implementation - the commitment of the users. This upgrade included some major technological changes that required a large degree of flexibility on the part of agency users and technical staff alike.

The biggest change for users involved the use of Computer-based Training (CBT). The SHARP Team was initially apprehensive about the user response to self-directed learning, but users indicated they were ready for a "do-it-yourself" setup. As the roll-outs began, many users were swamped with reading the CBT books and completing activities. Still others were plagued with technical difficulties. Some even had to complete CBT books/activities in a centralized computer classroom. Yet every call to the SHARP Help Desk indicated nothing but enthusiasm for finding solutions and moving forward. In addition to the CBT software and the PeopleSoft training database, users were faced with a new software package for reading attachments (Adobe Acrobat Reader) as well as changes to Rapid Filer and Print Lis software.

Our users are SMART!! Preparing for the worst, the SHARP Team assembled six full-time phone lines to accommodate Help Desk calls. From the beginning, it was apparent that the users did not need much help! Help Desk calls averaged 10 per day during the upgrade and are now averaging one or two per day. This demonstrates the ability of the user to read, learn and incorporate the new information.

We think everyone did an excellent job in making a smooth transition from SHARP version 4.02 to SHARP version

7.0. As we head into the new calendar year, there are a few changes remaining to be implemented. These include the addition of Benefits Event Maintenance, FMLA Administration, Retro Pay and Retro Benefits. Additionally, the current CBT books will be revised to include suggestions made by our users as well as information learned in the implementation process. We are confident that the users will accept and adapt to these changes as readily as the initial upgrade and we look forward to our continued effort to make our Statewide Human Resource and Payroll system the best that it can be. ☼

### Inside This Issue

This issue will focus on business process changes involving:

- ◆ Downloading & Applying SQR
- ◆ Event Maintenance
- ◆ Change Management



## NOTICE !



**A SHARP Customer Web Page is now available. This site includes a discussion page and a SHARP 7.0 FAQ page (answers to commonly asked questions handled by SHARP support staff). The Internet address is: <http://da.state.ks.us/Sharp>**

**C H E C K I T O U T !**

# Change Management

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Change affects each of us in very different and individual ways. Out of 10 people, two will eagerly embrace change. They love the thrill and excitement of new processes. Five individuals will take a "wait and see" stance. These folks want to make sure the change is going to provide sufficient benefits to justify adopting any new practices. That leaves the last three folks, and that is exactly the way to describe them. This bunch resists new processes and changes just as long as they possibly can.

By now, everyone has completed the Computer-Based Training (CBT) and is using SHARP 7.0. There can be no denial that add/update users have experienced change. No matter where you fit on the "change continuum," your excitement level may be very different than your office mate. To determine where you fit on the continuum, pay close attention to your personal clues, especially if you are

still feeling resistant to the changes. You may be more irritable or you may find work to be a less joyful place to be than it was before. There are things you can do to help the resistance symptoms subside.

One of the best ways to overcome those resistances is to be as familiar as possible with the new processes. If you aren't comfortable yet, take the time to go through training again. Don't hesitate to revisit your training source, whether that is a printed, hard copy or the Computer Based Training

(CBT) information. You may also access the training data base and repeat the exercises.

The good news is this upgrade went relatively smoothly. The rest of the story is that in the world of technology, change is the one constant on which we can rely. PeopleSoft will continue to offer upgrades every 12-18 months much like the personal computer software companies do. It may be difficult to adapt, sometimes, but it is always intended to improve processes and products. \*

## Automated Benefits Administration Processing

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One of the major process enhancements being implemented with the upgrade to PeopleSoft v7.0 is the automation of open enrollment and event maintenance processing in the Statewide Human Resource and Payroll System (SHARP). Open enrollment and event maintenance includes the collection and entry of certain employee benefit elections and the subsequent updates for qualifying and other events.

The automation of Benefits Administration processing is being implemented in two phases. Benefits processing for the October, 1998 open enrollment cycle is being processed using the automated benefits administration module in SHARP. State employees received customized enrollment forms which were mailed to their home address. In addition, employees who elected to make a change during this open enrollment cycle also received a confirmation statement mailed to their home address.

The next phase will include the automation of event maintenance processing. This phase will be implemented in calendar year 1999. Agencies will receive updated Computer Based Training materials prior to the implementation of automated event maintenance processing in SHARP. However, in order to successfully implement this module agencies can

begin to ensure the accuracy of the data fields which are used by the automated benefits administration module. The County field on an employee's home address and the Eligibility Config 2 field are the two primary fields which will be used by the automated benefits administration module to determine an employee's benefits eligibility. Agencies need to ensure that the county of residence is being entered each time an employee is hired or rehired. The County field should also be updated when an existing employee's address change results in a new county of residence. This applies to both the Home Address and Mailing Address portions of the Personal Data panels. The accuracy of the information in the County field is imperative for the correct assignment of benefits eligibility to occur.

Agencies should also be populating the Eligibility Config 2 field located on the Benefit Program Participation panel with the employee's Benefit Program Code as of the effective date of the job data row. This code should be entered for new hires, rehires and for job changes throughout the year. The accuracy of the information in the Eligibility Config 2 field is imperative for the correct assignment of the benefit program code to occur. As with any automated processing that occurs in SHARP, the reliability of the processing is dependent upon the accuracy of the fields used to trigger the processing. \*

### SHARP-SHOOTER

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# Downloading and Applying SQR Updates

As is inevitable when any new system goes live, there have been several updates to the new SHARP system since October 14. Most of the changes made to the system are done at the central level in the database itself. However, agency-run reports, and in particular the corresponding SQRs (the programs which create the reports), are not run centrally, but are stored and run

from local workstations or servers (depending on the agency's configuration). For this reason, any changes in these reports must be shipped out via the SHARP ftp site and installed by technical staff. This is in fact the same situation as existed in the old version of SHARP, although the procedures are slightly different with the new system.

When each update is created, two files

are added to the following ftp site:

**<ftp://165.201.56.7/Ps7sqr>**

The file names are in the following format:

sqrXXXX.exe (the self-extracting zip file containing the sqrs)

sqrXXXX.txt (the text file containing the instructions for the update)

where XXXX is the sequential number of the update (ex: sqr0002.exe). When these files are placed onto the ftp site, a message is sent out to all agencies to let them know the update is available and where the instructions are located. Currently this message is sent out through the SHARP message panel, but additional ways of informing agency technical staff are being reviewed.

Although it will probably be a rare occurrence, a particular SQR update has the possibility of containing some unique instructions, so it is best to check the text file before applying the update. Most instructions, however will be variations of the example instructions with the filenames being the only difference. \*

## SHARP Application Server

In late November, a new configuration file was made available to SHARP users. This file allows users to access SHARP through the application server. If this file has not been applied to your workstation, please contact your technical support person or the SHARP help desk at 785-368-8000.

The application server reduces traffic on the networks that connect your workstation to SHARP, and reduces the amount of memory that is required to process your transactions on the main SHARP server. As a result, response times for the transactions should be reduced. Please bear with us during the initial roll out of the new application server. It is not performing at its highest level. If you are absolutely unable to perform your business functions using the application server, you still have the option to connect to SHARP directly through Oracle. However, to get the most overall benefit for all SHARP users, we would appreciate it if you would access SHARP through the application server. You can do so by making sure that you select "Application Server" for the ConnectionType field on the PeopleSoft signon menu. Thanks for your help and patience in working with us on this matter. \*

### Example Instructions for downloading and applying sqr files

Update #3  
10/30/1998

This sqr zip file contains updated versions of the KPAY318 and KTEC028 reports. The instructions for downloading and installing this update are as follows:

1. Download the sqr0003.exe file from the following path:

<ftp://165.201.56.7/Ps7sqr/sqr0003.exe>

Save this file to a temporary directory, or if you wish and your browser allows, execute it directly from the server. If you execute it through your browser, skip to step 3.

2. Locate the sqr0003.exe file you downloaded and double-click on it to extract it.
3. When extracting the file, specify the path where you chose to put your sqrs when you installed Peoplesoft 7. (This self-extractor defaults this path to C:\Ps7\Ps7sqr\). This path should be the same as for the initial sqrs.

If you performed a file server install of Peoplesoft 7, this path was automatically set to the Ps7sqr directory within the Ps7 directory on your server.

If you performed a workstation install and chose to install the sqrs on the workstation as well, this is the Ps7sqr directory within the Ps7 directory on the workstation. If you did this, you will have to unzip the file on each workstation.

If you installed on a workstation and chose to put the sqrs on a file server, you were prompted to enter the path.

If you are not sure what this path was set to, run thePs7sqr.exe program within your Ps7\Setup directory from the workstation you are unsure of. You MUST be logged onto the workstation as the user under which Peoplesoft 7 was installed to see or change this path. This program will show you what the path currently is, as well as allow you to change it for that particular workstation. Make sure all workstations have the correct path to the sqrs; any workstation with an incorrect path will not be able to run on-line reports.

4. When you have extracted the zip file to the correct path and ensured that the workstations' sqr path is set correctly, you are finished. Users should now be able to run the updated reports.

If you have any questions concerning these instructions, call the SHARP Help Desk at (785)368-8000. From the menus, choose SHARP, then Technical Assistance.

In addition to the updates, there will be a zip file which contains *all* up-to-date agency SQRs, which may be downloaded at any time and unzipped following the same instructions. The only recommendation concerning this file (named allsqr.zip) is to delete all current SQR files (in the Ps7sqr directory) before trying to unzip the file. If this is not done, errors may result when Winzip tries to replace certain files. The all sqrs.zip file may be useful especially if you are not sure whether all updates have been applied.

## Dear Dead Eye...

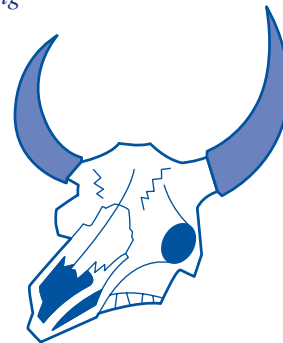
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**Q:** *I understand that the process for setting up Position Funding in SHARP 7.0 is very different from SHARP 4.02.*

**A:** While the new process for setting up Position Funding in SHARP 7.0 uses a new group of panels and technology, the underlying functionality is very similar to SHARP 4.02. Instead of funding group, version 7.0 uses the term account code to describe a unique combination of fund, index, PCA and funding agency use. Once established, the position pools and account codes are 'tied together' using the department budget panels in version 7.0, rather than the funding groups which were utilized in version 4.02. Positions may be associated to a Position Pool ID on the Position Data 1 panel. Because the version 7.0 department budget tables

are maintained at the department level and because separate panels are utilized to enter funding information for earnings, deductions and taxes, more data entry will be required by the agency if changes are needed to the data was converted from version 4.02 to version 7.0. However, because the data was converted to 7.0, users will only need to update Position Funding data in the Department Budget Table when they are adding a new funding group or making changes to an existing funding group. If you need to update Position Funding data for your agency, you should refer to the step-by-step instructions provided in the Management Positions and the SHARP Payroll 2 CBT books. You may also call and ask for assistance from the Division of Accounts and Reports or your HR Consultant at the Division of Personnel Services.

*All questions for Dear Dead Eye are welcomed and should be directed to "Dead Eye" at the project address, (785)296-4886, GroupWise - Quinn, Douglas, or E-Mail - [dougq@dabdas.wpo.state.ks.us](mailto:dougq@dabdas.wpo.state.ks.us) All questions will be answered in the following issue of the newsletter.*



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